

## Adaptive and Maladaptive Relationships between Parents and Children of Senior School Age in Different Groups of Families

### Адаптивні та дезадаптивні взаємостосунки батьків і дітей старшого шкільного віку в різних групах сімей

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#### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this article is: to describe adaptive and maladaptive relationships between parents and children of senior school age in different groups of families, taking into account dominant strategies of the activity, behavior, their styles and types.*

*Methods of the research. The following theoretical methods of the research were used to solve the tasks formulated in the article: a categorical method,*

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*structural and functional methods, the methods of the analysis, systematization, modeling, generalization. The pilot research was used as an empirical method.*

**The results of the research.** *We proved that significant socio-psychological factors that predetermined the formation of destructive manifestations of aggression of children in the system of parent-child relations, were: a socially unacceptable way of life of the family, disturbances in its structure and functioning, intra-family communication and interaction, psychological, physical, sexual violence committed against the child.*

**Conclusions.** *The main factor determining the specificity of manifestations of aggression of children is a psychological type of attitude of parents to the child and vice versa. At the same time, authoritarian-aggressive tactics of parents, their characteristics of a psychological type of parental attitude "hypersocialization", form indirectly manifested by children reciprocal-aggressive attitude towards parents. Emotional and physical distancing, characteristic for the psychological type of parental attitude, such as "rejection", forms the child's ability to confront them aggressively. Dominant-suppressive attitude of parents, characteristic for the parental type of attitude of "Infantilization", belittling individual-psychological characteristics and devaluing the personal achievements and aspirations of the child, provide his/her psychological "occupation" by parents, help to actualize the characteristics of the "symbiosis" type of attitude, suppressing the child as a person, form undisguised helplessness and egoism, negativism and hostility of children.*

**Key words:** *adaptive relationships, maladaptive relationships, dominant strategies of the activity, behavior, styles and types of families, negativism, hostility, dominant-suppressive attitude of parents, hypersocialization, infantilization.*

## Introduction

The following symptoms of the Psychology of adaptive and maladaptive relationships between parents and children of senior school are indicated in Psychological literature: *psychological deprivation* (Horney, 1994), *mental traumatization of the child* (Ivashkevych Ed., & Onufrieva, 2021), *assimilation of him/her to aggressive parents in relation to other people* (Tabachnikov, Mishyiev, Drevitskaya, Kharchenko, Osukhovskaya, Mykhalchuk, Salden, & Aymedov, 2021). The positions of different authors (Murphy, Melandri & Bucci, 2021) on the investi-

gated issue coincide with Western ones, since they are based on the fundamental approaches of science to the study of the psychological nature of a person, which is a set of human relationships that have been transferred inside and become the functions and structures of a person (Максименко, Ткач, Литвинчук, & Онуфрієва, 2019).

The most productive, in our opinion, is the approach that combines the analysis of the principles, strategies and tactics of bringing children up with the analysis of the components of the structure of the category “parental attitude”, which determines the quality and forms of manifestations of aggressiveness of children. The category “parental attitude”, as it was defined by scientists (Dubovyk, Mytnyk, Mykhalchuk, Ivashkevych Er., & Hupavtseva, 2020) is understood as a system of various feelings towards the child, behavioral stereotypes. The last ones were practiced in the process of communication with the person, the peculiarities of the child’s perception, understanding of his/her character and actions. So, we mean the child’s personality. The structure of the person distinguishes *cognitive, behavioral and emotional components*.

Parents’ ideas about the child’s character, needs, interests, abilities, which form the class of his/her evaluative characteristics, are included into the cognitive component of the structure of *parental adaptive relationships*. The educational attitudes and beliefs of parents, together with the evaluative characteristics of the child’s personality, forecasts and motives for his/her upbringing, determine the positions and behavioral lines in the educational strategies, their tactics: methods of the influence and adaptive personal interactions, communication with the child, forms of demands, a quality of control, a character of disciplinary sanctions.

Scientists (Комплієнко, 2020) argue if parents prefer rude dictate to all educational tactics, then this will inevitably lead to resistance from the child, who will respond with his/her own countermeasures: outbursts of rage, rudeness, overt or veiled

hatred and hypocrisy. Scientists also (Ivashkevych Er., Perishko, Kotsur, & Chernyshova, 2020) identify indulging variants of parental behaviour, determined by the parents' orientation and readiness to take any actions that provided physiological and psychological comfort to the child, influencing the formation of his/her unconstructive aggressiveness in the situations of manifestations.

In the studies of scientists (Jiang, Zhang, & May, 2019) it was assigned a key role to parental positions of upbringing children. According to the author (Mai, 2022), educational position of parents allows us to understand how certain conscious or unconscious motivational and emotional structures of their personality are refracted into the strategy of upbringing a child. These structures are expressed in specific behavioral and emotional manifestations in relation to the person.

Variations in different educational positions of parents from over-care to hypo-care form different types of *parental attitude towards children*: from *excessive care, attention and protection to formal attitude and peaceful coexistence, detachment and distancing*, and from all of them – to *connivance and rejection*. With overprotection, the authoritarianism of the parents is clearly visible, hypoprotection, according to the authors (Ivashkevych Er., 2023), often turns into connivance with children. *Hyperprotection*, according to the scientists (Mykhalchuk, & Khupavsheva, 2020), creates *indifference and selfishness* of children, leads to confrontation in the system of child-parent relations, and often results in "dictation from below", despotism of children. Maximum care, according to the authors (Mykhalchuk, & Onufriieva, 2020), does not allow the child to become *proactive and authoritative*; it forms *egoism and negativism*, which complicate social contacts of the maturing personality.

Scientists (Vovk, Emishyants, Zelenko, Drobot, & Onufriieva, 2020) note that the false beliefs of parents associated with providing the child with "maximum freedom" and minimum control. Such a situation often results in the formal performance

of parental functions, and such upbringing tactics, in its paradigm connivance, have an adverse effect on the formation of the individual, the formation of his/her characteristics.

We come to similar *conclusions*. So, exploring painful-aggressive manifestations of children with a tendency of parents to isolate themselves from the child, a lack of attention and care, and a minimum of protection in relation to him/her. Also, scientists (Tabachnikov, Mishyiev, Kharchenko, Osukhovskaya, Mykhalchuk, Zdoryk, Komplienko, & Salden, 2021) calls connivance, accompanied by open hostility and rejection of the child, the most negative type of parental attitude that forms a hostile personality.

**The purpose** of this article is: to describe adaptive and maladaptive relationships between parents and children of senior school age in different groups of families, taking into account dominant strategies of the activity, behavior, their styles and types.

### Methods of the research

The following theoretical methods of the research were used to solve the tasks formulated in the article: a categorical method, structural and functional methods, the methods of the analysis, systematization, modeling and generalization. The empirical method is a pilot research.

### Results and their discussion

In our own researches there were participated 57 families with one or two children of senior school age (38 families with one child and 19 families with two children). We've organized our research during 2024 in Ukraine. We showed that parents' strong conviction, that their children's development did not correspond to age standards, that they were not independent, and that they were unable to cope with current problems, had been realized in an infantilizing type of attitude towards the child, caused an aggressive protest of children. We found that the parents' fixation on the symbiotic community with the child, in es-

sence of his/her psychological occupation, was non-recognition of *autonomy* and *violation of privacy*, having been caused in a case of children as a reaction of affect and a desire for opposition.

Unconscious attitudes, false beliefs, erroneous ideas, unrealistic expectations, incorrect educational positions of parents and their formal fulfilment of basic responsibilities affect the style of upbringing children and the psychological type of attitude towards them. The Psychology of child-parent relations puts forward the thesis about the optimal educational position of parents, such as *adequate, prognostic, dynamic* one. In Table 1 we showed families with maladaptive relationships, with a direct dissocializing influence on the development of aggressiveness of children (Table 1).

In the analytical literature on the problem of aggressiveness of the child's personality and according to the specifics of its manifestations, the question of a reasonable manifestation of parental feelings has been also raised. We'd like to talk about unconditional acceptance, emotional support, exactingness and control of optimal tactics in use of the strategy of raising children and provide psychologically significant aspects of the manifestations of parental attitudes towards children of senior school age. We'd like to note that the inconsistency of parental educational tactics, actualized and manifested in the psychological type of parental attitude towards children (from the attention to rejection, from indulgence to severity), lead to tactics of defending the child's own interests, confrontation, negativism, boycott and other selective forms of manifestations of non-constructive aggressiveness, consolidating it as some stable personality trait (Table 2).

*Table 1*

**Families with maladaptive relationships,  
with a direct dissocializing influence on the development  
of aggressiveness of children**

A group of families	Family lifestyle, psychological atmosphere, their impact on adaptive and maladaptive relationships	Psychological aspects of parental adaptive or maladaptive attitude	Psychosocial situation of children (risk group)	States, feelings, experiences of children, forms of their expression
Criminally immoral (13.94%)	Immoral lifestyle, unhealthy moral atmosphere, criminal subculture, deformed value system, broadcast of lifestyle, involvement into youth criminal subculture, maladaptive family relationships	Rejection and cruelty, violence, incest, demonstration of antisocial, aggressive behavior patterns, deformation of the value system, aggression	Antisocial lifestyle, exposure to risk of violence, lack of positive social models, identification, emotional deprivation	Fear, hatred, bitterness, hostility, desire to destroy the living environment or social mimicry, psychopathy, auto-aggression, aggressiveness
With alcohol subculture and drug addiction (18.07%)	Lack of logic in the way of life, cult of alcohol, drugs, functional family disorganization, unhealthy moral atmosphere, conflicts, transmission of lifestyle to children, involvement into youth criminal subculture, maladaptive family relationships	Lack of basis for interaction, inconsistency and inconsistency, moral cruelty, physical and psychological violence, incest, aggression	Focus on negative lifestyles, on maladaptive family relationships, emotional and social deprivation, unpredictability, inhibition of feelings and needs, exposure to risk of violence, identification, assimilation	Feelings of uncertainty, insecurity, shame, anxiety, myths, fantasies, schizophrenia, psychopathy, depression, a desire to survive and adopt a lifestyle, anger, protest, escape, alcohol, drugs, auto-aggression, aggressiveness

With a cult of cruelty and violence (24.89%)	Priority of force, power, despotism, immoral atmosphere, broadcast of aggression, cruelty	Systematic infliction of moral suffering, psychological and physical violence, incest, moral cruelty, aggression	Lack of opportunity for personal development, violation of mental integrity, constant exposure to violence, identification with the aggressor	Fear, anger, malice, protest, deviant, delinquent behavior, hostility, cruelty, aggressiveness
Conflict-prone with communication problems (43.10%)	Communicative problems, relationships of disharmony, aggressiveness and conflict, maladaptive family relationships, emotional incontinence, alienation, hostility	Lack of community, connivance, emotional rejection, being drawn into confrontation, moral cruelty, psychological violence, aggression	Unconscious imitation, copying methods of sorting out relationships, lack of psychological balance, exposure to the risk of violence	Emotional callousness, inconsistency, conflicts, distrust, confrontation with a society, aggressiveness

Table 2

**Families with indirect dissocializing influence in the development of aggressiveness in children**

Groups of families	Family lifestyle, psychological atmosphere, their influence	Psychological aspects of parental attitude	Psychosocial development of situations (risk group)	States, experiences of children, forms of their expression
Overwhelming	Priority of force, power, authoritarianism, pedagogical failure, negative psychological atmosphere	Prohibitions, orders, exploitation, deprivation of attention, humiliation, punishment, psychological violence, aggression	Emotional deprivation, lack of communication, love, rejection, alienation, exposure to violence	A feeling of psychological orphanhood, a sense of resentment, hopelessness, insecurity, emotional callousness, aggressiveness



Rejecting	Lack of feelings, pedagogical and parental failure, negative psychological atmosphere	Moral cruelty, violence, neglect, boycott, fixation on shortcomings, rejection, aggression	Rejection, lack of care, love, physical, emotional deprivation, exposure to violence	Feelings of psychological orphanhood, inferiority, resentment, anger, lack of empathy, cruelty, aggressiveness
Dismissed	Lack of parental feelings, pedagogical failure, unfavorable psychological atmosphere	Iteration, indulgence, neglect, distancing, moral cruelty, psychological violence, aggression	Attention deficit, alienation, emotional deprivation, vulnerability to psychological violence	Feeling of psychological orphanhood, inferiority, emotional isolation, conflicts, hostility, aggressiveness
Hassle-free	Erroneous educational positions, pedagogical failure, lack of parental feelings, egoism	Indulgence, neglect, disregard, aloofness, moral cruelty, psychological violence, aggression	Lack of attention, care, love, emotional deprivation, susceptibility to psychological violence	Feelings of psychological orphanhood, pathological traits of character, negativism, behavioral disorders, aggressiveness
Incomplete	Disruption of family functioning, lack of educational resources, erroneous positions, excess or lack of feelings, special tone of the family atmosphere	Overprotectiveness or neglect, attachment or detachment, symbiosis, overprotectiveness, authoritarianism, hostility, rejection, aggression	Lack of father's influence and attention, lack of psychosocial role model, difficulty with gender identity, failure to meet current needs	Feelings of social discrimination, inferiority, loss of trust, emotional instability, negativism, revenge for deprivation of psychological support, aggressiveness

The content analysis of researches showed that deviation from the democratic basis of communication and interaction in the parent-child system, having been caused by violations within different components in the structure of the category "parental attitude" or simultaneously according to ways of attitude of parents towards pupils, leads to a tilt of educational tactics towards emotional distancing, authoritarian hypersocialization or psychological occupation, inconsistency, and it serves as the basis for manifestation of aggression of children. At the same time, within the paradigm of the psychologically optimal type of parental attitude towards children, maintaining the balance of providing the educational strategies, promoting the balance by parents of the measure and quality of control, disciplinary sanctions and parental feelings that suppress aggressive tendencies and aspirations of children, show us different manifestations of destructive aggression of children, that are not often observed. Table 3 presents the typology of parental attitudes that form aggression in children.

Having examined the problem of manifestations of aggression of children in the process of the analysis of modern concepts of parent-child relationships (Ferdowski, & Razmi, 2022), having watched psychological profiles of the attitude of parents to the child in the typology of the modern families (Huang, Loerts, & Steinkrauss, 2022), influencing their manifestations to the process of forming the character of a child (Horney, 1994); having substantiated the psychological types of parental attitude to the child, determining the features of its manifestations in children's character, abilities and possibilities, in the child's person in a whole, we came to the conclusions:

– the problem of manifestation of aggression of children in modern families in the sphere of parent-child relations is in the field of the influence of different psychosocial situations of the person's development, as a background and induction of the development of personality and his/her characteristics. Peculiarities of aggression of children, as a characteristics of destruc-

*Table 3*  
**Psychological types of parental attitudes that form aggression of children**

Dominant Strategies of the Activity, Behavior, their Style and Type	Basis of interaction	Extension	Installation, Position	Emotional background	Tactics
Authoritarian (Strategy), Hypersocialization (Style), Rejection (Type)	Demanding more than trusting, strict control, severe punishment	The Parent is above	Lack of autonomy, adequacy, dynamism, predictability	Negative, distant, cold relationships	Orders, demands, reproaches, suppression, rejection
Liberal (Strategy), Egocentric (Style), Laissez-faire (Type), Infantilization (Type)	Demandingness is less than trust, lack of control and regulation of discipline	The Parent moves from below	Autonomy, lack of adequacy, predictability	Positive, warm but distant relationship	Requests, explanations, approvals, indifference, sycophancy
Democratic (Strategy), Authoritative (Strategy), Controlling (Style), Cooperation (Type), Collaboration (Type)	Demand is equal to trust, control is the norm, regulation of discipline is explanations	The Parent is equal with a child (Democratic). The Parent is above (Authoritative Strategy)	Autonomy, adequacy, dynamism, predictability	Positive and warm relations (Democratic Strategy). Distant relationships (Authoritative Strategy)	Demands and requests, encouragement, support and explanations, a dialogue
Indifferent (Strategy), Peaceful coexistence (Style), Connivance (Type), Neglect (Style)	Lack of a basis for interactions, demands, trust and control, all possible punishments	Distancing from a child	Lack of autonomy, adequacy, predictability	Negative, relationships are cold, indifferent, possibly hostile	Separation, removal, deliverance, isolation, rejection
Contradictory (Strategy), Suspension (Style), Indifferent (Type)	Inconsistency in requirements, control and disciplinary sanctions	Now from below, now from above. From above to below (or vice versa). From adoption to rejection	Lack of autonomy, adequacy, predictability	Negative, the relationships are sometimes very warm, sometimes very cold, sometimes often they are indifferent	Encouragement, support, withdrawal, rejection, imposition

tive, abnormal behaviour in manifestations or normative-adaptive, neutral activity (in moral terms), depend on the influence of the specifics of the microenvironment of the parental family, the Psychology of relationships in it, the peculiarities of the parental relationships. So, parental relationships are cultural and historical phenomenon, which is characterized at present as dangerously aggressive phenomenon: threatening the health, development and life of children, trampling on their originality, individuality, blocking the development of children's personality;

– significant socio-psychological factors that predetermine the formation of destructive manifestations of aggression of children in the system of parent-child relations are: a socially unacceptable way of life of the family, disturbances in its structure and functioning, intra-family communication and interaction, psychological, physical, sexual violence committed against the child.

### Conclusions

In the group of families with direct dissocializing influences (criminal and immoral, with alcohol and drug subculture, cult of violence and cruelty) transmission to children by the way of life and delegation of requirements characterizes the microenvironment, helps to demonstrate "aggressive models" of behaviour and manifestations of cruelty. All these factors have such ones which are become factors predetermining manifestations of morbid-pathological aggressiveness of children, facilitate their criminal aggression in the system of child-parent and social relations. In the group of families with indirect dissocializing influences (incomplete, conflict, pedagogically insolvent) the factors, which are predetermining manifestations of destructive aggressiveness, conflicts and hostility of children in the system of child-parent and social relations. These are microsocial situation of the person's development, psychologically sensitive to their acquisition.

The main factor determining the specificity of manifestations of aggression of children is a psychological type of attitude

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of parents to the child and vice versa. At the same time, authoritarian-aggressive tactics of parents, their characteristics of a psychological type of parental attitude “hypersocialization”, form indirectly manifested by children reciprocal-aggressive attitude towards parents. Emotional and physical distancing, characteristics of a psychological type of parental attitude, such as “rejection”, forms in the personality of a child the ability to confront them aggressively. Dominant-suppressive attitude of parents, characteristics of a parental type of attitude “Infantilization”, belittling individual-psychological characteristics and devaluing the personal achievements and aspirations of the child, provide his/her psychological “occupation” by parents, help to actualize the characteristics of the “symbiosis” type of attitude, suppressing the child as a person, form well-learned helplessness and egoism, negativism and hostility of children.

Further researches of the specifics of manifestations of aggression of children in the system of parent-child relationships presupposes a targeted look at the child’s personality, identifying the essential characteristics of manifestation of his/her aggression as a destructive personality trait, actualizing the mechanisms of its formation, criteria and dynamics of the person’s development of children.

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**Ляшенко Лариса. Адаптивні та дезадаптивні взаємостосунки батьків і дітей старшого шкільного віку в різних групах сімей.**

**Мета статті:** дослідити адаптивні та дезадаптивні взаємостосунки батьків та дітей старшого шкільного віку в різних групах сімей.

**Методи дослідження.** Для розв'язання поставлених у статті завдань було використано такі теоретичні методи дослідження: категоріальний метод, структурно-функціональний метод, методи аналізу, систематизації, моделювання, узагальнення. Емпіричним методом було пілотне дослідження.

**Результати дослідження.** Доведено, що значущими соціально-психологічними чинниками, що запобігають навчанню в системі дитячо-батьківських взаємостосунків, є деструктивні прояви агресивності у дітей, зокрема: соціально-неприйнятний спосіб сімейного життя, порушення в її структурі та функціонуванні, у внутрішньосімейному спілкуванні та взаємодії, психологічне, фізичне, сексуальне насильство, скоєне по відношенню до дитини.

**Висновки.** Основним чинником, що визначає специфіку проявів агресивності дітей віком, є психологічний тип ставлення батьків до дитини. При цьому авторитарно-агресивні тактики батьків, властиві психологічному типу батьківського ставлення «гіперсоціалізація», формують у дітей опосередкований вияв ними агресивного ставлення до батьків. Емоційне та фізичне дистанціювання, характерне для психологічного типу батьківського ставлення, яким є «відкидання», формує у дитини здатність до агресивного протистояння їм.

*Домінантно-зверхнє ставлення батьків, властиве типу батьківського ставлення «інфантилізація», що применшує індивідуально-психологічні особливості та знецінює особистісні досягнення та устремління дитини, є характерним для типу взаємостосунків «симбіоз», психологічна гіперопіка батьків щодо дитини, що пригнічує учня старшого шкільного віку як особистість, формують у дітей неприховану безпорадність та егоїзм, негативізм та ворожість.*

**Ключові слова:** адаптивні взаємостосунки, дезадаптивні взаємостосунки, домінувальні стратегії діяльності, поведінка, стилі та типи сімей, негативізм, ворожість, домінантно-супресивне ставлення батьків, гіперсоціалізація, інфантилізація.

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